

1. Counting

A. Birds counted must be alive, wild, and unrestrained.

B. Only species found on the **PA Ornithological Records Committee (PORC) Bird List** with numerical abundance codes 1-6 will be accepted. This means **Northern Bobwhite** (code 7/extirpated) is not a valid entry. And while eBird no longer recognizes **Ring-necked Pheasant** as a wild bird found in PA, the PA Bird List does, making the pheasant an eligible bird to report for the Blitz. The full list can be found at <https://pabirds.org/records/index.php/pennsylvania-bird-list/>

C. Birds must be conclusively identified by sight or sound. **Generic species or hybrids** will only be accepted in the absence of a full species. (Example I: Carolina/Black-capped Chickadee will only be accepted if there are no Carolina or Black-capped Chickadees listed. Example II: Brewster's Warbler will only be accepted in the absence of Blue-winged or Golden-winged Warblers.)

D. For a species to count for the team total it **must be identified by at least 2 members of the team during the count period**. It need not be the exact same bird just the same species. For Big Day teams it will be on the specific day. For Cumulative teams it will be over the course of days the team is birding.

E. **Electronic or recorded songs and calls** may not be used to attract birds or entice them to vocalize. **The only exception** to this is for nocturnal birds such as owls and rails. Even then, playback should not be excessive. **Pishing** and other human produced sounds may be used but please do so sparingly to avoid over-stressing the birds.

F. **Online and phone app products** (i.e. **Merlin**, etc.) may not be consulted until a team has made an initial identification. Such technology is to be used as an aid in identification rather than the primary means of making an identification. All species identified by Merlin, or the like must be verified by at least 2 team members.

G. Only submit **birds physically located within the boundary of the count** (County or Region). The location of the bird is where the bird is located (ABA/PSO standard), not where the observers are located (eBird standard). Be aware of county, region, and state lines.

2. Areas

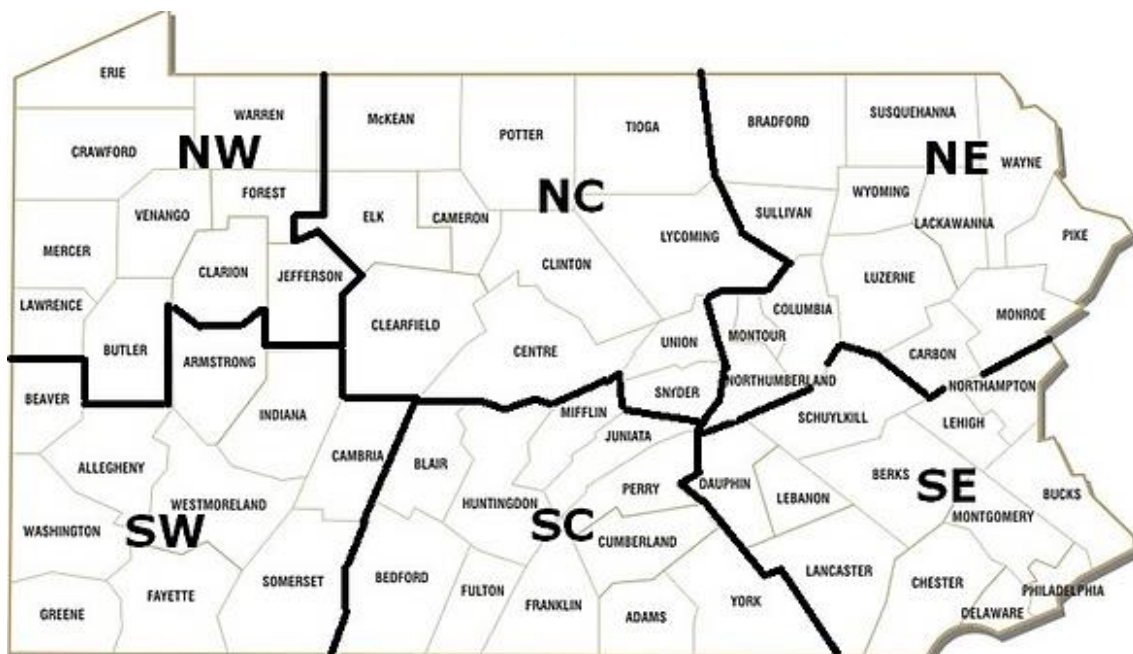
A. Two different geographic areas may be covered during the Blitz (County or Regional).

B. County lists will include all birds identified in a particular county.

(Example: Crawford County).

C. Regional lists will include birds identified from at least 3 counties of that region.

(Example: NE Region; Sullivan, Wyoming, and Luzerne counties).



3. Time

A. Counting for **Big Day** entries must be **within a single 24-hour period, on a single calendar day**. A checklist turned in for a specific day must have taken place entirely on that day. (Example: A Saturday checklist cannot have Whip-poor-wills heard on Friday night, nor owls heard on Sunday morning).

i. A team may participate in either the County or Regional competitions.

ii. County and Regional Lists may be for any amount of time on a particular day.

iii. Your time birding does not need to be consecutive as time out may be taken but birds identified during the time out may not be added to the list.

B. Counting for **Cumulative Count** entries must be done on **2 or more calendar days**.

i. A team may participate in either the County or Regional competitions.

ii. Birds added to the cumulative list can only be added to the list when identified by 2 or more team members AND officially participating in the contest. (Example: Your team birded together for the contest that morning. After disbanding for the day, you and another team member drive to the grocery store. On the way you have an incidental sighting of a Red-shouldered Hawk. This bird cannot be added to your cumulative team list).

4. Travel

A. Travel may be by any means unless a Low Carbon Team.

B. All birds identified while traveling may be included in the count list, if positively identified by at least 2 team members.

C. For Cumulative teams, identification of a species by two members does not have to be on the same day.

5. Participants

A. Two or more participants may constitute a team.

B. All **team members must bird together** (in visual sight of one another), no forming of subgroups at any time.

C. Participants may bird only part of the day as long as there are at least 2 participants left on the team at all times.

D. A participant who leaves the team may rejoin the team later.

E. Only bird species that are identified by participants while with the team may count be counted.

F. **Team composition may vary** on different days as long as it conforms to B4C rules.

6. Low Carbon Teams, Additional Rules

A. Team members may use a motorized means to travel to/from a start or end location. (Example: You are birding a 6-mile portion of the Appalachian Trail and you leave a car at the end destination for the day.)

B. Team members cannot take a break from the team by using motorized means to leave or rejoin the team.

C. Birds identified while using a motorized means of travel will not be included in your list.

7. Youth Teams, Additional Rules

A. The team must be composed of at least 2 youth at all times from with the **age range of 6 through 17** years old inclusive.

B. At least 2 youth on a team must identify a species for it to count on the checklist.

C. **Accompanying adults** may assist in identification or correct wrong identifications. However, the youth should be allowed to make the initial discovery of the bird and their knowledge should be primary in confirming the identification. Adults play a supporting role in helping youth reach a correct identification only as needed to do so. If the youth do miss a species in a specific location an adult can identify the bird, explain what leads to that identification (visual and/or auditory). That species will not be included on the official team count unless at least 2 youth identify the bird later in the count.

8. Atlas Block-Boosting Teams, Additional Rules

- A. Checklists **MUST** be submitted to the Pennsylvania Bird Atlas portal on your mobile device or at ebird.org/atlaspa/submit.
- B. Provide a count or estimate of the number of individuals reported instead of ‘X.’
- C. Keep separate checklists for different habitat patches within a block.
- D. Keep your traveling distance short – 1 mile or less, and duration of checklists short – 30 mins or less.
- E. Take care to stay within boundaries of a single block for each checklist.
- F. eBird hotspots frequently cover multiple blocks and therefore should generally not be used when you select your location. Instead, create separate checklists for each block and assign a more specific personal location to each checklist.
- G. Use Breeding Codes. See page 12 and Appendix A of the Volunteer Handbook for more information. https://is-ebird-wordpress-prod-s3.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2024/02/PBA3-Volunteer-Handbook_v2.3-1.pdf

9. Entries

- A. **Big Day teams**, turn in **one B4C Checklist or eBird Trip List** for the day of their count.
- B. **Cumulative Count teams**, turn in **one B4C Checklist or eBird Trip List** for the days they birded together.
- C. **One Hundred Dollars in donations** in the name of the team must be received by 5:00 p.m. on June 18th to be eligible to compete in any of the competitions.
- D. Send all entries no later than **5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 18th** to blitz4conservation@gmail.com

10. Submitting Entries (2 methods to do so)

- A. Method 1: Submit an eBird Trip List, that includes the following in the Trip List comments.
 - (i.) Team name, Team Members, and Date(s) of Trip List.
 - (ii) If it is a Big Day or Cumulative Count.
 - (iii.) If a County or Regional Count, listing the County or Counties covered by the checklist.
 - (iv.) Include any of these that apply: Low Carbon, Youth, and/or a Block Boosting entry.
 - (v.) Include the number of Accepted Species for the checklist. This may differ from what was submitted to eBird. (See 1.B. above)
- B. Method 2: Use the B4C Checklist (in excel or pdf format) that is available for download on the website under the Forms and Contact tab www.breedingbirdblitz.org/forms-contact.

11. Using eBird

- A. If you use eBird please keep checklists at 5 miles or less for traveling counts otherwise the data you submit will be less useful and may be invalidated by eBird. If Block Boosting, try to keep them to a mile.
- B. Though not required you are also encouraged to use breeding codes. The only exception are **Block Boosting entries** where breeding codes are required, along with following other Atlas guidelines. <https://ebird.org/atlaspa/about/data-submission-and-how-to-get-started-atlasing>
- C. Share your eBird checklists with **PSO Birding Data** so we can tabulate and share the data on species reported during the B4C. (This is not an additional means of entry to item 9 above but a means of pooling our eBird data together).